

Sub PHL
blank

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a clamping pad securing the blank to said steady blade;

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a support element in communication with the scrap and adapted to reduce defects in the blank associated with the trimming process.

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4. An apparatus as described in claim 1,
wherein said support element comprises:

an elastic pad.

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5. An apparatus as described in claim 1,
wherein said support element comprises:

a hydraulic cylinder.

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6. An apparatus as described in claim 1,
wherein said support element comprises:

a spring element.

~~7.~~ An apparatus as described in claim 1 for use with aluminum alloy blanks.

8. \An apparatus as described in claim 1 for
5 use in an automated stamping apparatus.

(9.) An apparatus for trimming scrap from a metal blank comprising:

a steady blade;

a clamping pad for securing the blank to said
10 steady blade; and

a moving blade movable past said steady blade
for trimming the blank; and

a radius formed on the leading edge of said moving blade adapted to reduce defects in the blank associated with the trimming process.

10. An apparatus as described in claim 9 for use with aluminum alloy planks.

11. An apparatus as described in claim 9 for use in an automated stamping process.

12. A method of reducing the production of defects during trimming operations comprising:

holding a blank between a steady blade and a
clamping pad;

moving a moving blade past said steady blade
25 to trim scrap off of said blank; and

supporting said scrap to reduce defects in
said blank associated with the trimming process.

13. A method as described in claim 12 wherein said supporting said scrap comprises:

30 preventing bending in said scrap during the
trimming process.

14. A method as described in claim 13 wherein said supporting said scrap comprises:

keeping said scrap substantially parallel to said scrap's original orientation during the trimming process.

5 15. A method as described in claim 12 further comprising:

reducing the strain concentration caused by said moving blade on said blank through the use of a radius formed on the leading edge of said moving blade.

10 16. A method of reducing the production of defects during trimming operations comprising:

holding a blank between a steady blade and a clamping pad;

moving a moving blade past said steady blade to trim scrap off of said blank; and

15 reducing the strain concentration caused by said moving blade on said blank through the use of a radius formed on the leading edge of said moving blade.